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Message Text

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ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SCCT-02 SSO-00 USSS-00 AID-20 PER-05

A-01 SY-04 FBIE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-11

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20

NSCE-00 INRE-00 OPR-02 OC-06 CCO-00 DRC-01 USIE-00

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FM AMEMBASSY SANTO DOMINGO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 1624

UNCLAS SANTO DOMINGO 4042

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINS
SUBJECT: HUTCHINSON KIDNAPPING - LOCAL RADIO COVERAGE

THE FOLLOWING IS A REPORT OF LOCAL RADIO COVERAGE FROM 10:00 P.M., MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 30, UNTIL 3: P.M., TUESDAY, OCTOBER 1.

1. LOCAL COVERAGE DURING THE EVENING CONSISTED PRIMARILY OF A SUMMARY OF EVENTS THAT HAD OCCURED DURING THE DAY AND ON-THE-SCENE REPORTS DESCRIBING THE RELATIVELY CALM ATMOSPHERE AROUND THE VENEZUELAN CONSULATE. IN THE NEWS SUMMARIES, THERE WERE SEVERAL REPORTS THAT THE US STATE DEPARTMENT HAD SAID THAT THE KIDNAPPERS HAD APPEARED TO HAVE DECREASED THEIR ORIGINAL DEMANDS AND WERE NOW WILLING TO ACCEPT SAFE PASSAGE FROM THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC IN EXCHANGE FOR THE RELEASE OF THE HOSTAGES. RADIO CLARIN COMMENTATORS, IN THEIR WRAPUP REPORT OF THE DAYS EVENTS, SAID THAT THE KIDNAPPERS APPEARED TO BE MORE RECEPTIVE TO NEGOTIATION THAN THEY HAD BEEN PREVIOUSLY. THIS WAS EVIDENCED, ACCORDING TO THEM, BU MONSIGNOR POLANCO BRITO'S THREE VISITS TO THE CONSULATE AND HIS TALKING WITH MENDEZ VARGAS AND THE HOSTAGES FOR A COMPARATIVELY LONG PERIOD OF TIME. THEY ALSO SAID THAT BECAUSE THE MONSIGNOR WAS DELIVERING MESSAGES TO AND FROM THE CONSULATE, THIS COULD BE AN IN-
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DICATION THAT HIGHLY SECRET NEGOTIATIONS WERE ALREADY IN PROGRESS. TH
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ADDED THAT THE MONSIGNOR'S STATEMENT THAT MENDEZ VERGAS APPEARED "LUCID AND CALM" AUGERED WELL FOR THE SITUATION IN VIEW OF THE FACT THAT IT HAD BEEN REPORTED IN ONE OF THE MORNING NEWSPAPERS THAT A PSYCHIATRIST HAD SAID THAT MENDEZ VARGAS HAD AN EXPLOSIVE AND VIOLENT TEMERAMENT.

2. IN MIDNIGHT NEWS SUMMARIES, THE UPI REPORT THAT THE DOMINICAN GOVERNMENT HAD OFFERED THE GUERILLAS A GUARANTEE OF SAFE PASSAGE IN EXCHANGE FOR THE RELEASE OF THE HOSTAGES, ACCORDING TO A "QUALIFIED DIPLOMATIC SOURCE", WAS THE LEAD STORY. THE SECOND STORY OF IMPORTANCE WAS THE REPORT THAT ANOTHER OF THE POLITICAL PRISONERS, LUIS RUIZ, HAD ASKED THE GUERRILLAS TO EXCLUDE HIS NAME FROM THE LIST OF POLITICAL PRISONERS THEY WANT RELEASED. RUIZ REPORTEDLY SAID HE WAS NOT DISPOSED TO LEAVE THE COUNTRY BY USE OF THIS METHOD.

3. EARLY MORNING RADIO COVERAGE, BEGINNING AT 5:30 A.M., CONTINUED TO SUMMARIZE YESTERDAY'S EVENTS. THE NEW DEVELOPMENTS REPORTED WAS THE ASSERTION THAT THE KIDNAPPERS HAD REDUCED THEIR DEMANDS AND WERE NOW ASKING ONLY FOR THE RELEASE OF PLINIO MATOS MAQUETE AND THE SAFE CONDUCT OF THE GUERRILLAS.

4. THE NEXT SUBSTANTIVE REPORTING BEGAN WITH THE ARRIVAL AROUND 10:00 A.M. OF AMBASSADOR HURWITCH, THE VENEZUELAN CHARGE, THE SPANISH AMBASSADOR, MONSIGNOR POLANCO BRITO, AND DR. PITTALUGA WHO WERE BRINGING FOOD, MEDICINE, WATER, AND CIGARETTES TO THE HOSTAGES. THERE WAS AN INTERVIEW WITH AMBASSADOR HURWITCH, BUT HE DECLINED TO COMMENT REGARDING THE POSSIBILITY OF NEGOTIATION. THERE WAS AN INTERVIEW WITH THE MONSIGNOR AFTER HE RETURNED FROM THE CONSULATE WITH VARIOUS WRITTEN MESSAGES FROM THE HOSTAGES. THE MONSIGNOR ALSO HAD A MESSAGE FROM MENDEZ VARGAS IN WHICH MENDEZ VARGAS HAD SAID THAT THERE HAD BEEN VARIOUS RADIO REPORTS THAT THE KIDNAPPERS HAD REDUCED THEIR DEMANDS. MENDEZ VARGAS WANTED IT KNOWN THAT THERE WOULD BE NO RELEASE OF THE HOSTAGES UNLESS ALL THEIR ORIGINAL DEMANDS WERE MET. POLANCO BRITO SAID HE HAD SUGGESTED, ON HIS OWN INITIATIVE, THAT MENDEZ VARGAS RELEASE THE WOMEN HOSTAGES IN EXCHANGE FOR A GUARANTEE OF ASYLUM IN EITHER THE MEXICAN OR PERUVIAN EMBASSY FOR THE INJURED GUERRILLA AND THAT MENDEZ VARGAS HAD REJECTED THE OFFER. THE MONSIGNOR AGAIN STATED THAT THERE WERE NO OFFICIAL NEGOTIATIONS AND
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WHEN HE WAS ASKED WHAT HE DISCUSSED WITH THE DIPLOMATS HE DECLINED TO COMMENT. HE REPEATED THAT HE WAS NOT ACTING AS A MEDIATOR AND HIS ROLE WAS SOLELY HUMANITARIAN.

5. THE SPANISH AMBASSADOR WAS REPORTED TO HAVE TOLD THE CORRESPONDENTS

THAT EACH OF THE MESSAGES DELIVERED FROM THE CONSULATE WERE BEING PHOTOCOPIED BY THE POLICE, AND WHEN HE WAS ASKED IF HE COULD COMMENT ON WHAT WAS BEING DOME TO SOLVE THE PROBLEM, HE DECLINED SAYING THAT HE COULD NOT COMMENT AT THE MOMENT.

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6. COVERAGE OF EVENTS AT THE CONSULATE WAS INTERRUPTED BECAUSE THERE WAS A SHOOTOUT BETWEEN THE POLICE AND A SUSPECTED DRUG TRAFFICKER. ALL THE RADIO STATIONS SWITCHED THEIR COVERAGE FROM THE CONSULATE TO THE SITE OF THE SHOOTOUT AND UNTIL NOON THERE WERE NO FURTHER REPORTS ON THE KIDNAP SITUATION.

7. THE NOON NEWS SUMMARIES LED WITH MENDEZ VARGAS' DECLARATION THAT HE HAD NOT REDUCED HIS DEMANDS. THE REPORT ON THE SHOOTOUT TOOK PRECEDENCE OVER THE KIDNAP SITUATION, BUT RADIO CLARIN, IN A COMMENTARY POINTED OUT THAT MOST OF THE PEOPLE INVOLVED IN THE KIDNAPPING OF LT. COL. CROWLEY FOUR YEARS AGO HAVE BEEN KILLED. THERE WAS A BRIEF MENTION OF THE MEETING BETWEEN THE HEADS OF THE DOMINICAN MILITARY FORCES, AND THERE WAS ALSO A REPEAT OF THE INTERVIEW MONSIGNOR POLANCO BRITO HAD GIVEN EARLIER IN THE MORNING.

8. AS OF 3:00 P.M. THERE WERE NO NEW REPORTS. THEY REPORTED THAT THE AREA AROUND THE CONSULATE WAS RELATIVELY CALM WITH LOTS OF CURIOSITY-SEEKERS MILLING AROUND, BUT THAT THE POLICE WERE IN A STANDBY CONDITION AND THE PRESS CORPS WAS STANDING AROUND WAITING FOR SOMETHING TO HAPPEN.
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Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 01 OCT 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
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TAGS: PINS, DR, US, (HUTCHINSON, BARBARA)
To: STATE
Type: TE
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